



ASSEMBLYMEMBER  
**NICOLE PARRA**  
Representing the 30th Assembly District



## Parra Notes

April 7, 2006

Hello Friends:

### WEEKLY HIGHLIGHT

On Thursday, I joined **Senator Jeff Denham**, **Assemblyman Michael Villines**, and other **Central Valley** leaders at a press conference held at the **Friant Dam** – we also took an aerial tour of the surrounding region. The group met to highlight the need to fix the state's broken levee system and to call for additional surface water storage facilities, with a special emphasis on the proposed construction of a dam at **Temperance Flat**.

The excess rain we have received over the past couple of months has shed a lot of light on the severe problems we face with our levees and surface water storage facilities. There is no disputing, especially after being on-site to see these facilities that we have a serious problem on our hands and it requires immediate attention.

I applaud the **Department of Water Resources Director, Lester Snow**, for announcing that **California** will provide \$30 million to the federal government for the **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers** to fix 10 of the 24 most severely battered sites in the state's levee system. But we must remain focused, because this is only a first step in solving the huge problems our levees face.

In March, during the debate over the Governor's proposed infrastructure bonds, I worked with a bipartisan coalition of lawmakers in calling for a fair distribution of state funding to the **Central Valley** for levee and surface water storage project assistance.

We tried to come to an agreement over levee and surface water storage funding in March, but we could not get there. The clock is ticking down on the fortunes of a lot of residents and it is important for my colleagues to realize exactly how serious this problem is, especially in the **Central Valley**. We need to come back to the table and come to a compromise that will bring quick relief to a worsening problem.

Earlier in the week, **Assemblywoman Karen Bass** and I, along with **flood management personnel** from the **Department of Water Resources** toured levee and water conveyance facilities in Yolo and Sacramento Counties.

Strengthening our levees can no longer be just something we talk about, and if we do not shore up these facilities now, we risk putting millions of Californians in harm's way by an act of omission. I encourage more of my colleagues to take a closer look at the functioning capacity of our levee systems, because this is a problem we cannot wait to fix at the eleventh hour.

### NOW, TO THE REST OF THE WEEK IN SACRAMENTO

I had a chance to sit down with representatives from the **California School Employees Association (CSEA)** to discuss legislative and classified employee issues. The **CSEA** is the largest union of classified school employees in the nation, representing over 230,000 employees in California alone.

To read more about the **CSEA**, please check out their web site at <http://www.csea.com/>

The **Mayor of Coalinga, Ron Lander**, and **Delano Mayor Ruben Hill** paid me a visit to talk about some of the issues facing community correctional facilities. I let both mayors know that this is a budget item we are monitoring closely on the **Senate** side and that we will continue to hold meetings and conversations on the subject with other stakeholders.

For more information regarding the cities of **Coalinga** and **Delano** and the work they are doing, please visit their web sites at <http://www.coalinga.com/> and <http://www.delano-ca.org/>, respectively.

I had fabulous meetings with members of the **Fresno-Madera, Tulare County, and Kern County Medical Societies** in order to discuss various legislative, medical, and public health topics. We also conversed about the lack of medical specialists in the **Central Valley** and the low Medi-Cal reimbursement rates to community clinics and hospitals. I really enjoyed listening to the experiences of these doctors, who are all members of **California Medical Association (CMA)**, in their clinics and hospitals.

If you would like to learn more about these organizations, please take a look at their web sites <http://www.fmms.org/> (**Fresno-Madera Medical Society**), <http://www.tcmsonline.org/> (**Tulare County Medical Society**), <http://www.kms.org/> (**Kern County Medical Society**), and <http://www.cmanet.org/> (**California Medical Association**).

I had a chance to also spend some time with representatives from the **Western Growers Association (WGA)**. **WGA** is an organization that provides legislative advocacy support for its member farmers in order to keep them competitive in both **California** and **Arizona**.

To find out more about the **WGA**, please view their web site at <http://www.wga.com>

Representatives from the **California Primary Care Association (CPCA)** stopped by my office to have a chat about their legislative priorities as well as general issues and challenges facing community clinics and health centers.

I encourage you to read more about this organization on their web site <http://www.cPCA.org/>

This week, the **Assembly** also held a memorial floor session on the passing of former **State Assemblyman Marco Antonio Firebaugh**, of **Los Angeles**.

Marco died a young man, and his youthful spirit will truly be missed. He worked hard to support the next generation of thinkers and leaders in California through his work in getting **UC Merced** off the ground and running, and in his efforts to allow immigrant students to pay in-state tuition.

Marco's passion for public service and his dogged determination to change things for the better and to never stop fighting for those who could not fight for themselves served as inspiration to us all. We have lost a leader in the truest sense of the word.

I also participated in a press conference with a bipartisan group of lawmakers, local elected officials, and concerned citizens to support **AB 2840**, which will help ensure fair auto rates for all drivers.

**AB 2840** requires that before any changes can be made to the way auto rates are calculated, a statewide study must be done to ensure the changes will result in rates that are fair and are based on the actual costs to provide insurance to each driver so that certain drivers are not forced to subsidize others.

The bill is in response to regulations proposed by **Insurance Commissioner John Garamendi** in December 2005. Under **Commissioner Garamendi's** proposal, big city drivers would get arbitrary rate cuts but other drivers would have to pay higher rates to subsidize those cuts.

### **ONGOING ACTIVITY**

When you have some free time, please join **Pastor Jordan, Isiah Crompton**, and other community members in their effort to get out the message about stopping violence in our communities. They walk from house to house every Saturday, knocking on doors and explaining to people the importance of keeping an eye on and working against violence in our neighborhoods. I would like to invite everyone, from individuals, to families, to groups of friends, and any concerned organizations to join us in making our streets safer for our families and our children. For more information on the **Stop the Violence** campaign, please contact **Pastor Jordan at (661) 472-2637**.

### **COMMUNITY GROUP HIGHLIGHT**

The **California Coalition for Youth's (CCY)** mission is to be the **PLACE** that improves and empowers the lives of California's youth by:

- **Partnering** with youth
- **Linking** with youth-serving programs throughout California
- **Advocating** for youth rights
- **Connecting** youth to resources
- **Educating** communities, policymakers, and stakeholders

The **CCY** also coordinates a statewide, toll free, 24-hour, confidential phone crisis line available to young people between the ages of 12-24, and concerned friends and family members. **CCY** provides crisis intervention counseling on many issues including family problems, sexual assault, eating disorders, teen pregnancy, substance abuse, suicide and more. **CCY** offers support, encouragement, and referrals to youth needing assistance or in crisis situations. The **California Youth Crisis Line** connects an average of 12,000 callers with vital resources annually. Agencies as well as young adults from every county in California use the Crisis **Line's** toll-free number, **1-800-843-5200**.

### **COMMUNITY GROUP HIGHLIGHT**

The **California Youth Connection (CYC)** is a statewide organization comprised of foster youth, both past and present, who work diligently in formulating policies and advocating for legislation on behalf of California's foster youth population.

For more information on **CYC**, please visit their web site at <http://www.calyouthconn.org/site/cyc/> or simply call **CYC's** statewide office at 415-442-5060.

### **INTERESTING LINK**

If you would like to learn more about our great state, I encourage you to take some time and visit the official web site of California at <http://www.ca.gov/>

The portal site is an informative and educational guide that offers insights into a number of California-related subjects and issues including education and training, business, health and safety, consumers and families, labor and employment, state history and culture, travel and transportation, the environment and natural resources, and state government.

### **NEED HOMEWORK HELP?**

The **California State Library** has made available through their website a new service called **Live Homework Help**. This service enables students to connect on-line with a tutor for assistance with homework questions. Supported by Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) federal funding, students can access Live Homework Help through [28 California public libraries](#). It is important to note that the tutors who respond to student questions are screened, trained, and closely monitored.

Live Homework Help is easy! Log on to <http://www.library.ca.gov/tutor/> from your computer any time between **1:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.** and follow the simple setup instructions.

### **MEETING REQUESTS**

If you or your organization would like to set up a time to meet with me or would like for me to attend an event you are sponsoring, please feel free to contact my **Executive Secretary Ellen Manolis** at (916) 319-2030 or by e-mail at [Ellen.Manolis@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Ellen.Manolis@asm.ca.gov) .

### **INTERNS WANTED**

I am accepting applications for the fall internship program in my **Hanford, Bakersfield** and **Sacramento** offices. Candidates should be residents of the 30th Assembly District, possess solid research and communication skills, and have a strong interest in public policy and political issues facing the Central Valley. Applications can be found by going to: <http://democrats.assembly.ca.gov/members/a30>.

For Hanford office internships contact **Matt Rogers** at (559) 585-7170 or by e-mail at [Matt.Rogers@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Matt.Rogers@asm.ca.gov).

For Bakersfield office internships contact **Paula DeLaRiva** at (661) 334-3745 or by e-mail at [Paula.DeLaRiva@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Paula.DeLaRiva@asm.ca.gov).

For Sacramento office internships contact **Brandon Sanders** at (916) 319-2030 or by e-mail at [Brandon.Sanders@asm.ca.gov](mailto:Brandon.Sanders@asm.ca.gov).

### **ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY**

**1862:** Union General Ulysses S. Grant defeated Confederates at the Battle of Shiloh, Tennessee.

**1864:** The first camel race in America was held in Sacramento, California.

**1933:** Prohibition ended in the United States.

**1940:** Booker T. Washington became the first black to be pictured on a U.S. postage stamp.

**1988:** Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev agreed to final terms of a Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. Soviet troops began leaving on May 16, 1988.

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